

Knife Fire Update

Date: May 29, 2006, 5 p.m.

Fire Name: Knife Fire

Time/Date Started: May 27, 2006; Called in by O'Leary Lookout at 2:14 p.m.

Location: Southeast of Walnut Canyon; about 14 miles east of downtown Flagstaff; on the Coconino National Forest

Cause: Human-caused; under investigation

Fuels: Pinyon/juniper woodlands; grasses; lots of dead material

Size: 560 acres

% Contained: 80 %

Estimated Containment Date: Evening of May 31, 2006

Resources Committed: 6 engines, 1 water tender, 2 Type 1 crews (Mormon Lake Hotshots from the Coconino National Forest and the Pike Hotshots from Colorado), 2 Type 2 crews (Navajo), 4 dozers, and several individual firefighting personnel; Total personnel = 119. Several agencies are assisting in the suppression of the fire including the Forest Service, Summit Fire Department, Highlands Fire Department, Sedona Fire Department and Parks-Bellemont Fire Department.

Estimated Cost to Date: New estimate available tomorrow.

Predicted Weather: Light winds are expected tonight. Winds are expected to be lighter tomorrow than today. Temperatures will gradually increase through the week.

Structures: No structures threatened.

Concerns: The frontage road (Road 4) on the south side of Interstate 40 between Winona and Twin Arrows is closed. Also, Forest Road 82 is closed at its junction with Forest Road 128. Motorists are asked to avoid the fire area due to heavy use by firefighting equipment and personnel.

Summary: While the fire is estimated at 560 acres, there are many areas within the fire's perimeter that remain unburned. This is a concern for fire managers because those unburned pockets could flare up in the future given the right conditions. Firefighters spent today conducting burnout operations to remove some of those unburned islands of fuel. Overnight, firefighters will monitor the fire to ensure it remains within containment lines. Tomorrow, firefighters will continue monitoring the fire and conducting burnout operations to remove fuel within the fire's interior. Also tomorrow, firefighters will begin mopping up. During mop-up operations, firefighters seek out remaining hot spots and extinguish them while also working to reinforce the already-created containment lines.

Restrictions: Campfire and smoking restrictions are in place for the Coconino National Forest. The Knife Fire was human-caused, although the exact cause is still under investigation. Forest visitors are

urged to obey the rules regarding campfire and smoking restrictions. Violation of these prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000, imprisonment of not more than 6 months, or both.

- Campfires, charcoal grills, and stove fires are prohibited on national forest lands, roads, and trails. An **exception** will be to continue to allow these campfires in developed **fee** recreation sites where grills and campfire rings are provided.
- Pressurized liquid or gas stoves, lanterns and heaters meeting safety specifications are allowed.
- Smoking is prohibited except within enclosed vehicles, buildings, or developed **fee** recreation sites where the area is cleared of all flammable material.

Contact Numbers: 928-635-5607, 928-606-7490